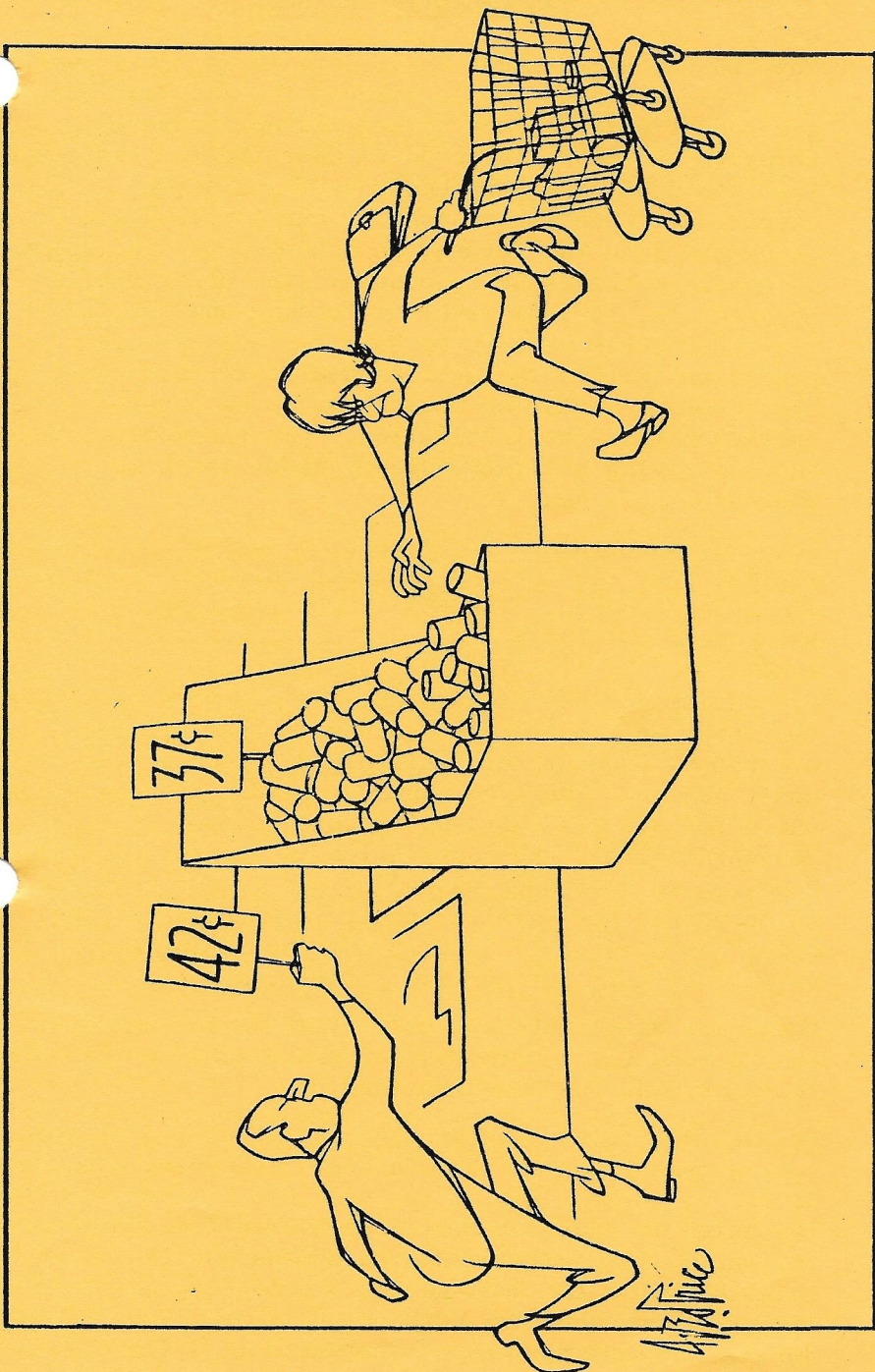


FSA NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER
1981

THE EXECUTIVE RETREAT

The FSA Executive spent Sat., Oct. 17, at a retreat. Its prime business was to discuss the implications of the budget exercise the College is now performing. Briefly, we are being asked to describe the reductions that would be necessary under certain budget situations. One is the cost of our services now projected into the future; in other words, inflation is added to the existing budget. The other option supposes the 1981-82 level of funding and asks us to list what would have to be done to keep next year's operations within the dollars available this year; in other words, inflation would have to be covered by cutting within the institution. (At the moment, the cost of living has increased by about 14.7% in Vancouver this year.)

So, Executive talked about ways of making the community realize that its options, and its children's options, are being reduced. The FSA is contributing, like management and the Board, to a College effort to raise awareness. We also intend to develop our own priorities in case of cutback. We are very concerned for jobs, and we are also concerned that programs offered to students are maintained. Once a student can't get one course he wants or needs, he goes elsewhere for all his courses. Once enrolment starts a downward spiral, the institution is in real trouble. However, we have been warned by our lawyer that the Union should not involve itself in recommendations which may eventually lead to someone losing a job, so we have to sort out our own priorities.

Executive also addressed the effect of College growth on JCAC and the points system, and discussed the workload involved for JCAC members.

We also discussed general negotiating attitudes and some areas of particular concern. Technological change is one of these. One of the problems is that too often the Union is confronted with technological change after the fact. The decision has been made and the money invested. Douglas College has a good clause; it is too long to reproduce here but a copy is available (from Jocelyn Creigh) for anyone who wants it. You will be hearing from the Contract Committee; make sure your shop steward hears of ideas and concerns or convey them in writing to Roberta Paton or Doug McDowell.



"Remember, Bogs, labour can work without anyone managing, but management can't work without anyone labouring!"

A MAJOR PROPHET?

Last year at C-IEA's first convention, the British Columbia Association of College's Executive Director, Frank Beinder, gave a warning of his own when he made the keynote address. "It is very difficult to avoid the conclusion that we are witnessing an inexorable move towards greater centralization as our institutions move to becoming an instrument of the state rather than of the community...The colleges are, in fact, become so attuned to the trend that one seldom hears talk of local autonomy any more." He added to this by saying, "Society generally expects its people to learn to earn. We have to ask, nevertheless, if we are not abrogating responsibility in terms of long-range goals. Is it time to re-assert the implicit values of education? Are we paying enough attention to the need for balance in a technological society." (The attitude may find a parallel in that expressed by a major figure in a minor college well south of the border: "Any time they start teaching something we don't like, we cut the money off. It's amazing how that changes philosophy.")

"Do you see your function as the teaching of people to keep books, invest money, operate machines, or pass examinations as ends in themselves? Or do you have some feeling for the development of people in whom the ability to deal with material imperatives is merely a necessary adjunct to the eventual creation of a better society? It's a little sad to say that in this

day and age, one feels embarrassed to speak of such things, though the alternative may be a modern feudal society in which a corporate aristocracy is served by a highly trained and technologically sophisticated peasantry." (Many people within the colleges, from students to Board members, remain committed to the regional/community college idea and to the values that underlie the "Open Door Policy." But there seem to be those in government who do not share this enthusiasm.)

Mr. Beinder had another important point to make. "Learning in isolation is attractive to some and essential to others. However, in this age of specialization and compartmentalization, the last thing we need to encourage is isolation of the individual in any activity. If in the interests of cost-effectiveness we are going to say that if, as a provincial standard, less than thirty, or less than twenty, or less than some other hypothetical number are enrolled a course will not be mounted, leaving students with Open Learning or no course at all, we will have abandoned our objectives. Smile and tell me it won't happen, but don't dismiss the possibility from your minds." (The present budget exercise makes Mr. Beinder appear a Prophet. And nowadays no one seems to be smiling about it.)

COLLEGE ALPHABET

JPDC or *PDC* or *Joint PDC*: The Joint Professional Development Committee has the responsibility, under the Collective Agreement, of administering and allocating the Professional Development Fund. They have delegated decisions on in-service PD (under 14 days) to divisional allocation committees (see next month's newsletter) but still decide on requests for educational or exchange leaves. This committee must also be consulted on all evaluation procedures affecting members of the bargaining unit prior to those procedures being implemented. The committee is also responsible for the College-wide PD Day, and attempts to publicize and encourage participation in PD activities by all employees in the College.